



Symposium

Shared Principles, Aligned Action

Building on Success

*Iterating within and beyond
corequisite models*



Melinda Karp

FOUNDER
Phase Two Advisory



Elizabeth Hart

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
ENGLISH & ACADEMIC
LITERACY

Community College of
Baltimore County



Amy E. Brown

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Community College
Research Center

Why we're speaking to you today

Melinda: running a CoP for states that are evolving their dev ed reform approaches; conducting a study of dev ed innovation

Amy: cofacilitated a yearlong CoP with 4 colleges focused on developing innovative teaching/support practices that build upon existing dev ed reform work

Liz: English faculty member on CCBC's CoP team working with CCRC

Welcome!

We would like our session to be interactive.

Please take out your phones and use the QR code or the website to tell us a little bit about you.



menti.com

5655 9725

Framing and Root Cause Analysis

What we know about corequisite support

As compared to prerequisite course sequences, corequisite support:

- Expands access to gateway English and math ([Ran & Lin, 2022](#); [The RP Group & California Community Colleges, 2025](#))
- Improves timely completion of college-level coursework ([Ran & Lin, 2022](#); [Austin et al., 2024](#))
- Improves outcomes across racial/ethnic groups ([Hu et al., 2019](#))

What we *also* know about corequisite support

- Corequisite support is highly variable in terms of structure, content, access, and the student experience ([Litschwartz et al., 2023](#))
- Many students opt out of corequisite support ([Karp & Lyons, 2024](#); [Segovia et al., 2026](#))
- Large numbers of students remain unsuccessful even with corequisite support ([Cuellar Mejia et al., 2023](#); [Yandle, 2024](#); [Ran & Lee, 2025](#))
- Equity gaps narrow but do not close under corequisite models ([Bickerstaff et al., 2022](#); [Schudde & Ryu, 2025](#))

Thinking about continuous improvement: Levels of Iteration

Troubleshooting

- What challenges have you encountered at a state level?
- What challenges have you heard your institutions encountering at an institutional level?

Improving

- How do you maintain momentum? The culture?
- How do you encourage continuous improvement beyond compliance?

Evolving

- What are the major issues / red flags you see in student outcomes?
- What mechanism is in place to continue identifying areas for growth beyond the current solution set?

Levels of Iteration in Practice

Troubleshooting

- Addressing inconsistencies in how placement occurs & how students are advised

Improving

- Aligning / refining practices, course structures & academic supports to improve student success

Evolving

- Reimagining first-year composition & mathematics

Root Cause Analysis

**Structural
mismatch**

**Pedagogical and
behavioral limitations**

**Normative
inhibitors**

**Systems
Misalignment**

What root causes might contribute to students not being successful in a corequisite model?

Structural mismatch

Corequisite approaches fix one structural challenge – longevity - but do not address others, or introduce new ones.

The hours required for corequisite courses do not account for students' other obligations.

Narrow curricular choices mean that some content, readiness skills, or supports are excluded.

Corequisite participation delays access to personally meaningful academic content / programs of study.

Corequisite participation is reliant on informed decision-making & omits the role of self-agency.

Pedagogical and behavioral limitations

Approaches used within corequisite models do not fully address the ways that students engage with content and learning.

Corequisite supports do not closely couple with gateway course content.

Lack of student-centered, developmentally-informed learning

Lack of real world + culturally-relevant content and teaching approaches.

Normative inhibitors

Campus cultures and beliefs that, when conveyed implicitly or explicitly, undermine students' self-concepts and learning beliefs.

Faculty / staff (mis) perceptions of students, including deficit framing

Lack of attention to students' sense of belonging, self-perceptions, & self-efficacy

Classroom cultures that fail to normalize mistakes and struggle as part of the learning process.

Systems Misalignment

Corequisite reforms occur without strong connectivity to other parts of students' educational journeys.

Dev ed reform conducted in isolation rather than with aligned to achieve institutional transformation.

Limitations of state policy to nurture iteration and innovation.

Lack of partnership and collaboration with K12 to address pipeline issues.

Institutional constraints inhibiting continuous improvement or innovation.

Developmental Education Reform Inquiry Tool

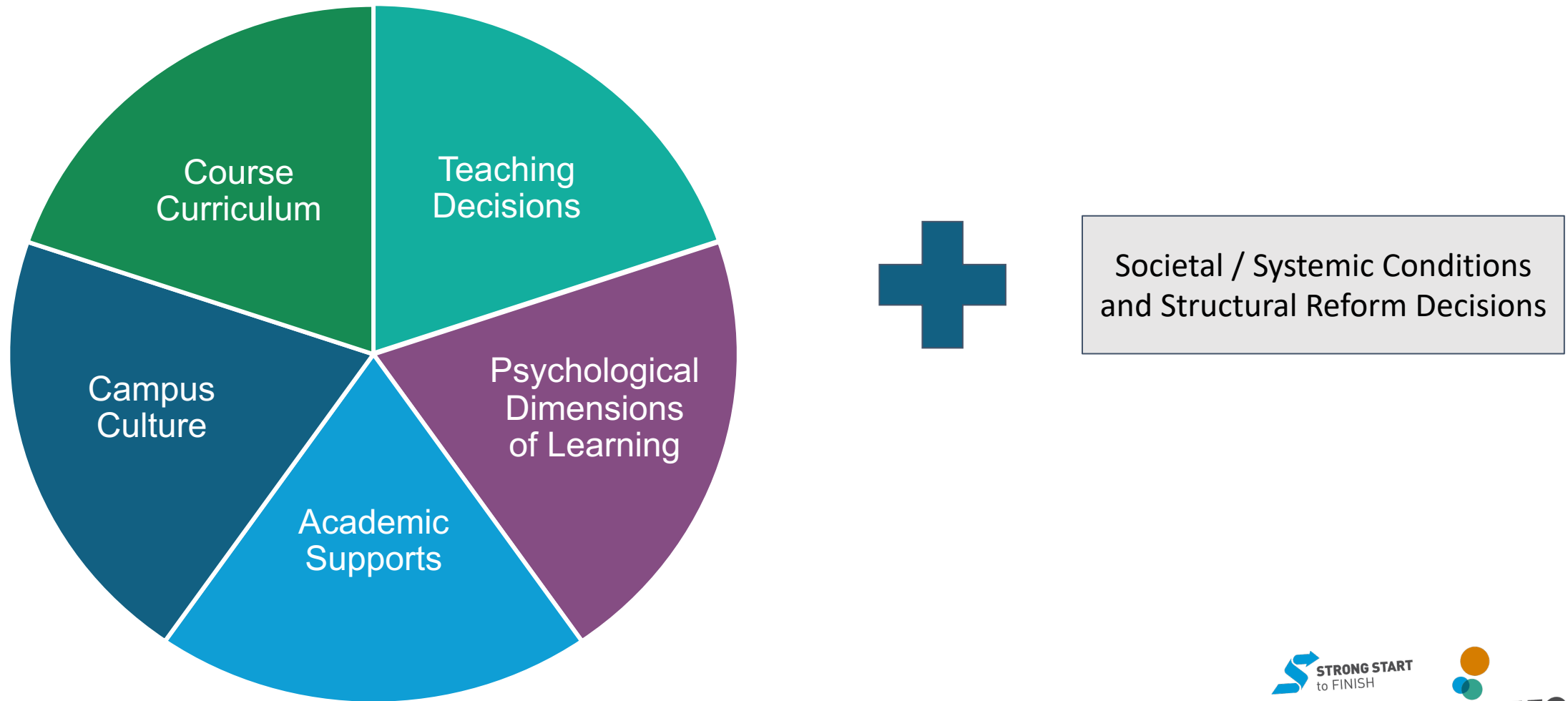
Developmental Education Reform Innovation Incubator Project

- 1 year community of practice with 4 colleges (Summer 2025-Spring 2026)
- Colleges with mature dev ed reforms
- Develop and support faculty-led innovative practices; build capacity for self-assessment and scaling
- Opportunities for cross-college learning

5. Employ Evidence-Based and Asset-Oriented Instruction
9. Empower Faculty and Staff as Collaborative Leaders
10. Commit to Continuous Improvement and Accountability
[part of] 8. Center Student Voices in Designing Improvements.

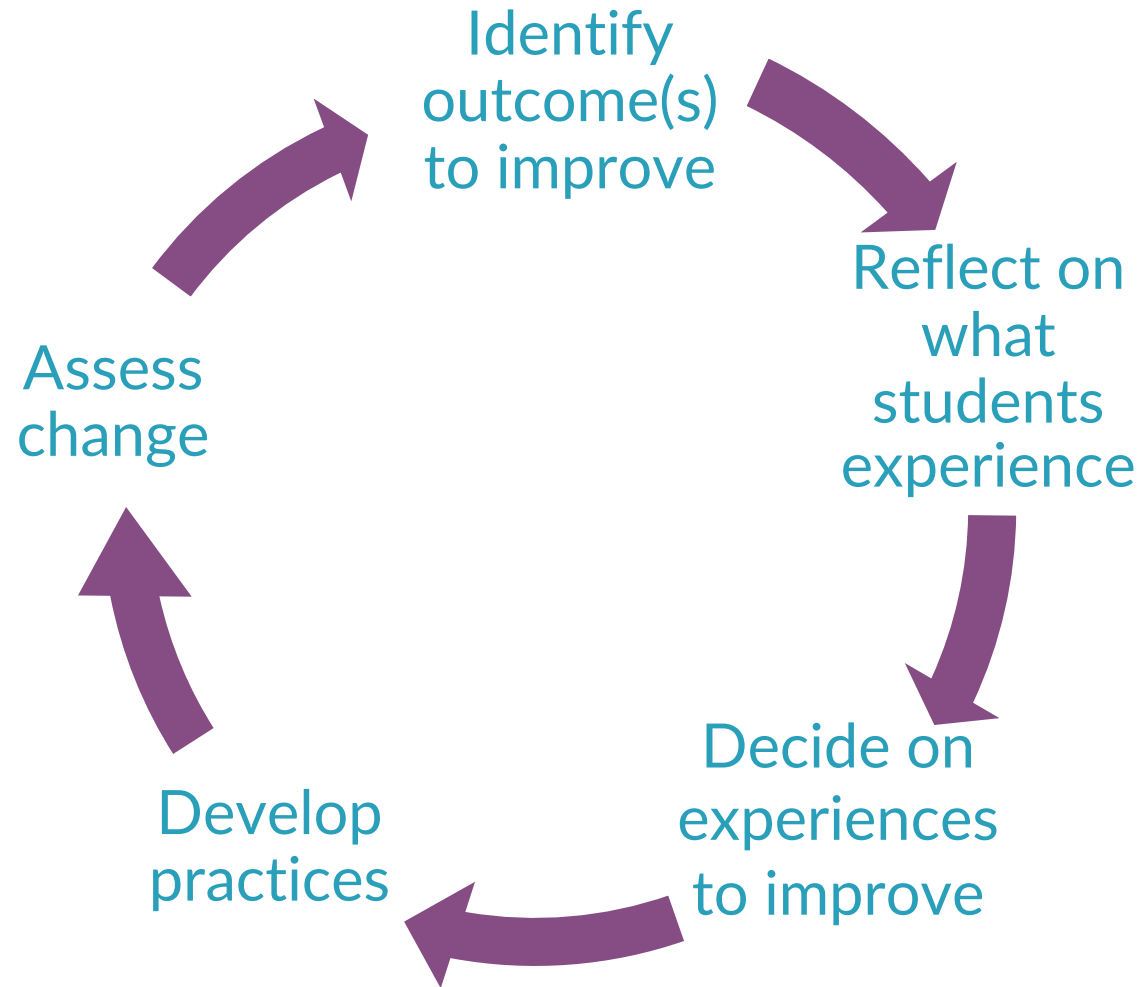


Factors That Contribute to Outcome Disparities



[Brown & Bickerstaff \(2026\)](#). Next-generation developmental education reform: Developing practices to reduce disparities and improve outcomes.

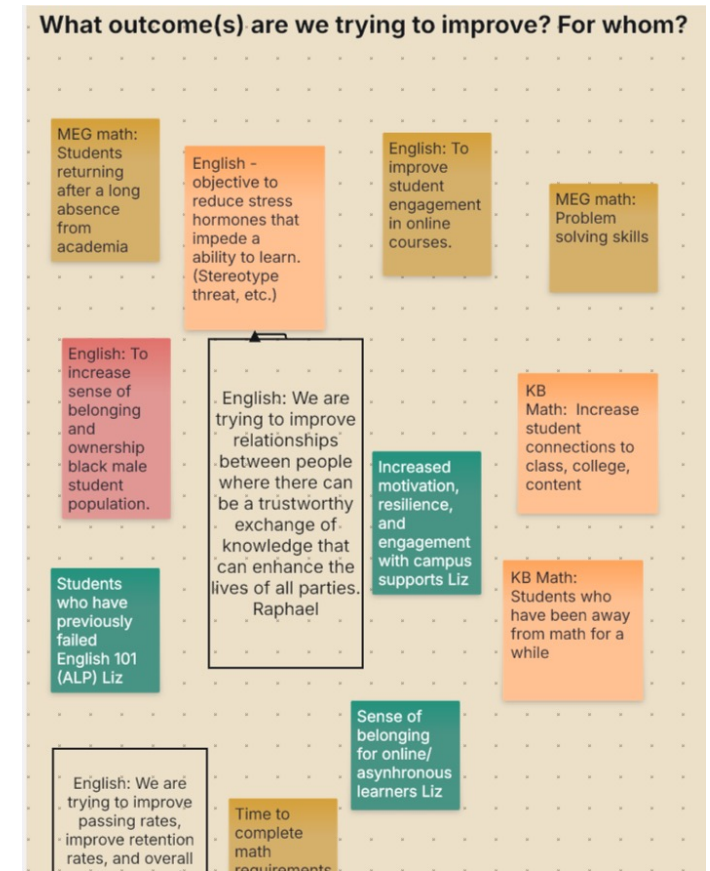
A Cyclical Inquiry Process to Improve Outcomes



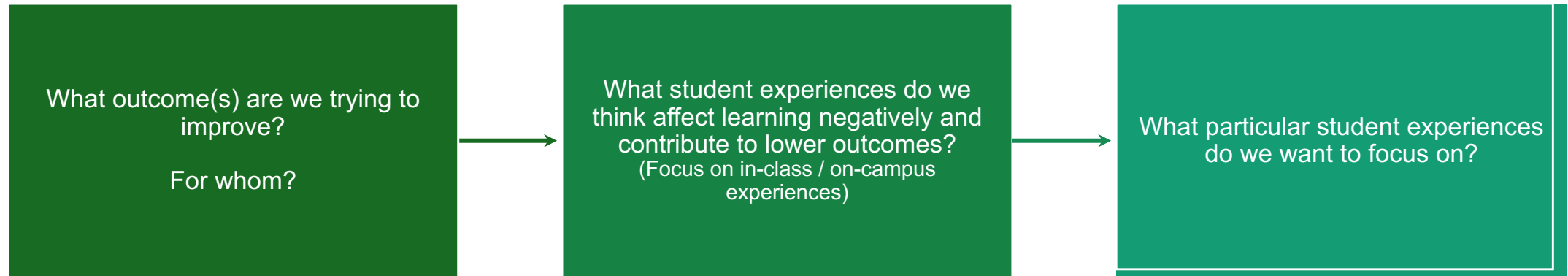
[Brown & Bickerstaff \(2026\)](#)

Application of CCRC's Developmental Education Reform Inquiry Tool at Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC)

- 3 English faculty and 3 Math faculty from CCBC began the CoP with a decisively siloed approach, as evidenced in our initial work with the Inquiry Tool
 - We labeled our virtual "stickies" by department instead of looking at our students holistically
 - While we were trying to improve outcomes for the same students, we were not working in a cross-disciplinary way
 - The Inquiry Tool helped us discover that meaningful change would only happen when English and Math faculty viewed gateway completion as our common purpose and shared goal



Activity: Using the Inquiry Tool to Think About Our Institutional Contexts



- *Folks at institutions:* Reflect on how you would respond to the first three boxes in the tool.
- *Folks at state systems, support orgs, foundations:* How could institutions you work with use a tool like this?
- Then form a pair or small group and discuss.

Innovation Examples

Root Causes and Potential Iterations

Structural mismatch

Corequisite approaches fix one structural challenge – longevity - but do not address others, or introduce new ones.

Replace corequisite with smaller class sizes, recitation session, and integrated support

Reading-for-math

Pedagogical and behavioral limitations

Approaches used within corequisite models do not fully address the ways that students engage with content and learning.

Embedded tutoring and support

Community-based writing

Participating CoP Colleges and their Innovative Practices



- Build community and increase engagement among students taking Structured Learning Assistance (corequisite courses) using collaborative classroom activities
- Incorporate reflective writing and polling that enable instructors to respond to student needs



- Expand successful Math Academy experience to dual enrollment secondary students
- Identify key teaching practices and new culturally relevant activities / assignments to integrate into Math Academy and share with field



- Develop professional development opportunities to support faculty and build community around teaching Learning Support (corequisite) students



How the Inquiry Tool Became a Mechanism of Change at CCBC: Cross-Departmental Classroom Innovations

Small classroom "microlesson" innovations designed to support gateway momentum

- English faculty visit Statistics (most highly enrolled math class)
 - Support reading and critical thinking skills
 - Share mindset strategies to promote belonging and counter stereotype threat
 - Normalize help-seeking techniques and study skill strategies
- Math faculty visit English 101 (required for all students)
 - Share the importance of mathematical thinking across the curriculum
 - Promote literacy about math placement and data on gateway momentum and degree completion

"Math and English faculty at large institutions often serve the same students and struggle with the same challenges but never get structured time to figure out solutions together.

Neither CCRC researchers involved in the Incubator project nor the CCBC team have seen other colleges doing this kind of sustained cross-disciplinary collaboration between math and English departments." ([Raufman, 2026](#))

[Brown & Bickerstaff \(2026\)](#) and [Raufman \(2026\)](#). How CCBC's Math and English faculty are building a bridge for student success (blog).

Scaling

A tension: State levers versus institutional change

- Much of our current improvement needs are at the classroom and curricular level, or go beyond current enabling legislation.
- What are your "moves" to get folks to shift their behaviors and beliefs?
 - Persuasion
 - Invoking rights
 - Shifting powers and decision-making

Challenges Related to Scaling (CCRC CoP Colleges)

- Challenges for involving faculty in innovative teaching efforts
 - Limited bandwidth and institutional supports (e.g., institution does not prioritize PD or has scaled down CTL supports)
 - Attention and time directed toward other institutional/statewide initiatives
 - Perceptions that content time will be sacrificed, new practices not aligned with existing teaching styles → Mitigated in part by faculty leadership
 - Political climate
- Challenges to reach students
 - Attendance, time burdens, hard to adapt innovative practices to be engaging in online course contexts

Strategies to Support Scaling (CCRC CoP Colleges)

- Opportunities for CoP teams to share about work and connect with (internal/external) folks who can support or advocate
- Resources to help track/measure student success w/new practices
- Team-specific strategies:
 - ASU Mid-South: Package materials in LMS, leverage faculty observation of peer classes
 - Hartnell: Partner with K-12 and local communities to increase DE math enrollment/DE Math Academy participation for underserved students
 - Vol State: Expand PD opportunities in the academic year for LS and non-LS faculty and obtain PD stipend incentives

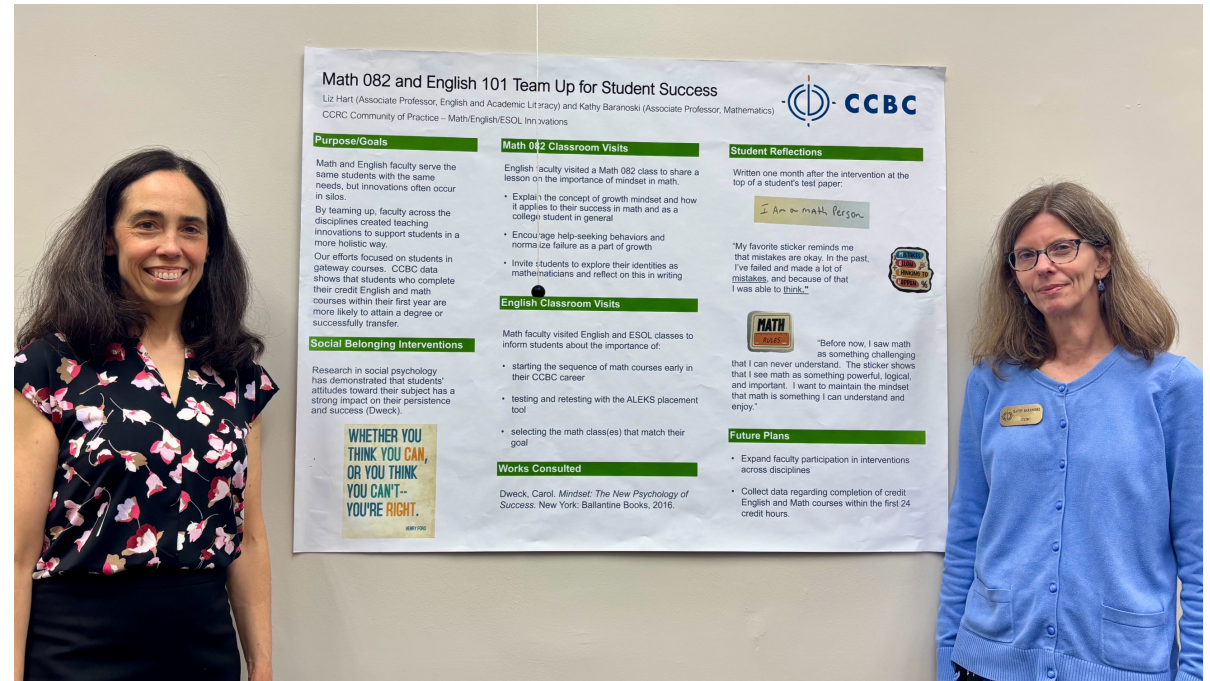
How the Inquiry Tool Became a Mechanism of Change at CCBC: Spreading Microlessons Beyond the Community of Practice

January 2026: CCBC's Inaugural Student Success and Momentum Think Tank

- Full-day convening of faculty from English/ESOL and Math to promote a shared vision of gateway completion as our guiding principle (not only discipline-specific pass rates)
 - Shared specific classroom innovations and gave faculty time to form cross-departmental partnerships and brainstorm small classroom innovations
 - Simple (yet effective) student-centered strategies were developed and implemented during the spring semester

May 2026: Faculty Learning Communities Poster Presentations

- Faculty who formed partnerships and implemented classroom innovations gave poster presentations to spread the work across the college



Leveraging the Inquiry Tool as a Launch Pad for Developmental Education Reform and Gateway Completion

Future Plans

- Spread the work to adjuncts who comprise a large number of faculty teaching gateway courses
 - Explain the crucial role of gateway classes as a decisive "inflection point" in a student's academic trajectory (Stroman, 2019).
- Promote cross-departmental initiatives designed to encourage transparency for students regarding the benefits of gateway course completion
- Collect and disaggregate data on how these small interventions may have an impact on student success and "throughput"—particularly for minoritized student populations (first-generation, part-time, Pell eligible, etc.)
- Seek funding and support for these grassroots initiatives

In discussing inflection points, Stroman argues, "This approach draws on research showing that students' sense of belonging responds to signals from their environment. Students are particularly sensitive to these signals at certain points, such as moments of transition, difficulty, or setbacks. The cues students receive in these moments, if they do not affirm students' sense of belonging, can set in motion negative, [self-reinforcing cycles](#) that can adversely affect long-term outcomes." (Stroman, 2019; Quay, 2018)



CCBC's Focus on Core Principles 9 & 10:

- "Empower faculty and staff by cultivating a culture of innovation and collaboration."
- "Use disaggregated data to design solutions that meet the needs of students from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances."

Discussion

- When you think of innovative models or practices being implemented within and beyond corequisite models, what examples come to mind?
- How can folks in your roles foster and support innovation, iteration, learning, and scaling within and across depts/institutions/states?

Check out these resources from CCRC!

Next-Generation Developmental Education Reform: Developing Practices to Reduce Disparities and Improve Outcomes

By Amy E. Brown and Susan Bickerstaff

To increase the number of students who succeed in college-level math and English, community colleges across the nation have adopted evidence-based approaches to identify students in need of academic support and to accelerate their enrollment in college-level coursework. These reform efforts have yielded successes, including larger numbers of students completing college-level coursework and achieving other longer-term academic milestones. Yet even in reformed contexts, many students are not successfully completing college-level math and English, often called gateway courses, within their first year.

This report explores reasons why some students are left behind and considers strategies for reaching them, with a specific focus on mitigating disparities in outcomes across student subgroups. Drawing on a literature review and a scan of relevant teaching and support practices being implemented in broad-access institutions nationwide, we describe drivers of outcome disparities in reformed developmental education contexts. Then we introduce the Developmental Education Reform Innovation Incubator—a community of practice made up of participants from four community colleges focused on developing, refining, and scaling practitioner-conceived reform practices—and discuss activities undertaken by the four colleges to improve outcomes for students identified as needing greater developmental education support. We briefly describe elements of each college's current approach and identify connections to drivers of outcome disparities. We also discuss an accompanying [inquiry tool](#) that faculty and administrators at other colleges can use to better understand developmental education concerns at their own institutions and develop practices to improve success for students.

As a result of major reforms to developmental education over the past decade, more incoming college students are completing college-level coursework in their first year. Yet, even in reformed contexts, some students still struggle. This report describes additional reform practices aimed at expanding student success.

Developmental Education Reform Inquiry Tool



Questions for Identifying Innovative Practices to Improve Student Experiences and Outcomes

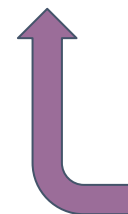
This tool is for teams of faculty, staff, and administrators who have already implemented developmental education reforms (including multiple measures assessment, corequisite remediation, and math pathways). The questions support reflection and planning to implement new practices within teaching, learning, and support contexts to improve more students' experiences and outcomes in college-level math and English. We recommend that teams begin by discussing the first two questions (about outcomes they would like to improve and their observations about what students may be experiencing that contributes to lower outcomes) and soliciting data to better inform their understanding of students' experiences. Then teams can focus on the remaining three questions to build an action plan to guide their next steps. This inquiry process can be repeated to support continuous improvement efforts.

1. What outcome(s) are we trying to improve? For whom?

- Consider which developmental education reform contexts you would like to focus on (courses, academic supports, other programming) and what outcomes to consider (course pass rates, course attendance, completion of course-work and major assessments, uptake of academic and student supports, enrollment in next course, next term / next year persistence).
- Examine institutional, departmental, and course-level data to better understand student outcomes in these contexts.
- Identify what students have lower outcomes and if those students share similar experiences, behaviors, or attitudes.

2. What student experiences do we think affect learning negatively and contribute to lower outcomes? (Focus on in-class / on-campus experiences.)

- Consider how institutional policies, campus culture, course curriculum, pedagogical decisions, and/or the psychological dimensions of learning shape these students' learning and success and might contribute to disparities.
- Think about your hypotheses and the types of evidence you can observe from your roles as faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Speak to these students to learn more about their experiences.



Scan here for
the report and
Inquiry Tool!

Thank you!

Melinda Karp, melinda@phasetwoadvisory.com

Amy E. Brown, aeb2265@tc.columbia.edu

Elizabeth Hart, ehart2@ccbcmd.edu